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things it touches that it makes them new. It not only realizes the divine offices of the prophet, priest and king, but it vivifies the story of the Christ as nothing else has done outside the simple annals of the Gospels.

He told me on the Bosphorus the story of how he came to undertake "Ben-Hur"; substantially the same account is in this "Autobiography." No library or home in our land or any other land can afford to be without this book of extraordinary human interest and remarkable achievement. OLIVER OTIS HOWARD.

LELAND: SCHOLAR AND MYSTIC.*

AMONG those American men of letters who, toward the middle of the last century, undertook the discovery of Europe, Charles Godfrey Leland occupies a unique position. By turns German Bursch and Romany Rye, social lion in London and friend of Florentine Witches, writer of comic verse for "*Die Fliegende Blätter*" and lecturer before the Royal Institute, it is doubtful whether any of his compatriots became more closely identified with foreign life or more familiar with foreign tongues. Perhaps because of the very diversity of his achievement, Leland is less known and less clearly understood than he should be, and hence the recently published "Life" possesses particular claim to consideration.

It must be conceded at the outset that these absorbing volumes do not offer a uniformly analytical or judicial estimate of the picturesque and magnetic "Hans Breitmann." Based upon his uncompleted "Memoirs" and supplemented by numerous letters, the work is in essence the warmly affectionate and endearing tribute of niece to uncle. It is not that Mrs. Pennell permits personal loyalty or family considerations unduly to color her judgment, it is merely that she has been unable to escape the inherent appeal of her subject. Perhaps, after all, sympathetic biography is equally as valuable as scientific; in any case, it affords infinitely better reading.

Born in the famous "Dolly Madison house" on Chestnut Street, below Third, in the quiescent town of the Quaker, Leland represents the active rather than the passive principle of Penn-

* "Charles Godfrey Leland. A Biography." 2 vols. By Elizabeth R. Pennell. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

sylvania mysticism. Presumably endowed with the same spiritual heritage as those about him, he early became a restless, insatiate nomad, both actually and mentally. As a lad he was considered "peculiar," and small wonder, for by twelve he was learning French, Latin and Spanish, and at fifteen was translating Villon and rapidly mastering Provençal. At Princeton, his "*Mala Mater*," as he sadly called her, where "piety and mathematics" were rated higher than linguistic accomplishments, Leland naturally made an uneven though brilliant record. Throughout the entire course he read voraciously, not, he says, "for a purpose, but to gratify an intense passion." He delved deep into metaphysics and mediævalism as well as Voltaire, Tom Paine and other "exploded dangers." One week he was a Transcendentalist, the next a Puseyite, and always he was a curiously eager, inquisitive intellectual explorer. The very narrowness and rigidity of his surroundings seemed to act as an inspiration, a challenge.

The transition from Princeton to Heidelberg was precisely what the delicate, bookish youth needed. Knowing the language well enough on his arrival to be christened "Germanicus," he entered lustily into student life. In a memorable letter to William Tiffany, dated July 24th, 1846, he exclaims with gusto: "What times! What men! What tobacco! What beer! Here, in Heidelberg, I have seen divers duels—clash and smash! But, my dear man, you have no earthly conception *what* a people the Dutch are for *kneipen*. The way they do smoke and drink beer is atrocious!" And yet he was himself no mere onlooker, adding, not without a touch of pride: "In this matter I modestly hint that *I* am not *small*." Each letter during this period rings with joyous, wholesome reaction against the arid and constrained traditions of Philadelphia and Princeton. There were numerous excursions to near-by towns or dances at country fairs, where the "proud and vicious nobles" (the students) participated none too decorously in the pleasures of "the poor and happy" (the peasantry). At Heidelberg our somewhat full-blooded young mystic devoted himself, oddly, to chemistry, but later in Munich he took up the study of æsthetics, which subject he continued the succeeding year at the Sorbonne.

While Paris at first proved sharply to him how thoroughly Germanized he had become, it was not long before he was taking

his "*petit verre* and *café*" and joining gayly in the usual student balls and fêtes. That "extraordinary talent for getting into adventures" of which he often speaks by no means deserted him in the French capital, for the revolution soon broke about him in picturesque fury, and the big, striking American student did not fail to play his part with real, though conscious, bravery. In his own words he thus describes a day's campaigning:

"I turned out in the *Grande Révolution*, armed like a smuggler with dirk and pistols, saw some fusillades, helped build some barricades,—was *capitaine* at one nice little one in our Quartier, and distributed percussion caps and consolation to the heroic *canaille*, not to mention being at the plunder of the Tuileries."

He was not, however, a serious patriot, and did not wait to see affairs right themselves. His three years being over, he crossed the Channel to London and later sailed from Portsmouth, reaching home in the autumn of 1848.

His devoted biographer characterizes the next few years of Leland's life as being his period of storm and stress, and such they unquestionably proved. In order to appease the proprieties, he consented to read law, though he never practised, the claims of literature being more numerous and insistent than those of his clients. For a time he was in New York assisting Griswold on the "Illustrated News," returning later to Philadelphia as editor of "Graham's Monthly." Although pay was slender and uncertain, he worked unremittingly, contributing articles on an incredible range of subjects to the pages of the "Knickerbocker," the "Continental" and other long-since defunct publications. Though "Meister Karl" achieved a certain success, it was not until "Hans Breitmann" flashed into being that Leland became famous. It is quite true, as Mrs. Pennell reluctantly infers, that the younger generation does not read the "Breitmann Ballads"; yet, even so, it is refreshing to realize how hugely our fathers relished that delectable "mixture of beer and pure reason."

The welcome accorded "Breitmann" and the removal of financial pressure consequent upon the death of his father induced Leland to relinquish the position he then held on "The Press," and henceforth, save for a brief sojourn in Philadelphia during the early eighties, he passed the remainder of his days in England and on the Continent. Just as he had known every one of consequence in the world of letters, music and art at home, so

abroad he enjoyed the friendship of an equally distinguished circle. Always independent and outspoken, he was not one to be awed by the fetish of an exalted reputation. For Lowell, Holmes, Whitman, George Boker and others he professed the highest regard, but did not hesitate to fall foul of Emerson in the following not over-fastidious phraseology:

"Emerson dabbled with mysticism and paddled in metempsychosis, and shirked pantheism, as did Carlyle, while using it as a garment, and made beautifully talkee-talkee with free thought, and posed as a liberal mind, and exalted Goethe; but would have died of blushes and sunk into his boots before Greek fleshliness."

While the conventionally celebrated, such as Browning, Tennyson, Bulwer, Besant and the like flit through the latter portions of the book, Leland's lot was never wholly cast with them. What he loved most were the diverting by-paths of the mind; he much preferred the open road to a polished doorstep. Professor Palmer, the Orientalist, Francis Hindes Groome, the foremost Gypsy scholar of his day, and Borrow, then a grumpy reminiscence living respectably in Brompton Square, were the men he cared most about. There seemed always to have lurked in the heart of "the Rye," as Mrs. Pennell often calls him, a longing for Gypsyland, and it was old Matty Cooper, chief of the Romanies, who first opened wide to him the gates of this alluring realm. Within a remarkably short time he mastered the language better than Borrow had ever done; and some time later had the distinction of discovering Shelta, the tinker's dialect, hitherto unknown to scholars. His interest never flagged; wherever he happened to be, he would seek out his dark-eyed friends and chat familiarly with them, singing their songs and telling them stories in their own strange tongue. An unquenchable thirst for the occult and the untrodden led him still further afield. He unveiled the secrets of Voodooism and Witchcraft, collected all manner of legends and folk-tales, and as a result left behind him some of the most curious and enchanting books in the language. Despite his undoubted erudition and phenomenal powers of assimilation, it cannot be claimed that Leland possessed an exact or scholarly mind. Physically imposing and pictorial, he was temperamentally a romanticist. Enthusiasm for the subject in hand often led him to commit grave errors. In his list of Shelta terms were several Gaelic words, and his Algonkin legends were not all simon-

pure Algonkin nor even simon-pure Indian. Though younger and better-equipped men rapidly took his place in the field of linguistics and mythology, he will, however, always rank as a stimulating precursor; an inspiring, even commanding figure. While this "Life" of Mrs. Pennell's gives him the proper setting and shows him in exact relation to his surroundings, it is to be regretted that he left no record of that quaint, sedate, social atmosphere of which he was really a product and to which he often referred with such charm and penetration. That he might have pictured Philadelphia with incomparable sympathy is amply proved by a letter written from the Bagni di Lucca in 1893, in which he says:

"I wish I had thought of it—I would have made more of old Philadelphia. Should I ever return there, I will put *all my heart* into a book on the subject and write it all in flowers, perfumes—reeds in the rivers — quaint old golden-brown evenings — the scent of buckwheatcakes baking in the early morning—magnolia fragrance mingled with roasting coffee—ghosts of bygone Cadwaladers and Whartons and memories of pretty Quaker girls in the sunset light on Arch Street."

He goes on to say that "there are not many living *now* who can do it," and he was right. Yet the home call was never quite strong enough. He died abroad still a seeker, and a wanderer, fascinated to the very last by the mysterious and the remote.

CHRISTIAN BRINTON.

"LINCOLN THE LAWYER."*

THE man who writes about Lincoln has the happy privilege of placing a bright spot on every page, if he will, by quoting a few of Lincoln's written or spoken words. It may well be one of the effects of this cause that American editors—to the envy of their English brothers—hold the theme of Lincoln as an ever-ready refuge in time of trouble. They have learned by repeated experience that there is no name in American history with which they can conjure so successfully. Year by year, even as the actual workings of Lincoln's mind and heart become more familiar, he takes more surely the place of a great mythic figure, typifying something characteristically American, embodying the work of destiny or Providence in supplying our ship of state with

* "Lincoln the Lawyer." By Frederick Trevor Hill. New York: The Century Co.